

Postscripts by Jack Post

Come spring, no one could deny the delight of Duxbury, first with its forsythia, then with its venerable lilacs and wisteria, its pink and white dogwoods against the pleasant background of our comfortable houses. Following a logging road back into the woods, you can see the same pattern when the track opens out into a clearing where rough-hewn foundation stones mark where the foundations once stood. There lilacs, some ancient apples or perhaps a gnarled pear tree or two cluster, blooming in the softness of the new season.

We inherit this loveliness, and surely most of us appreciate it; but it takes some doing to keep our village looking fresh the year round, as more and more people rush in over ever-growing miles of paved roads, inevitably creating refuse, and hardly noticing in their hurry what happens to it, too preoccupied to contemplate the leisured loveliness we so treasure.

Yet people do care, all kinds of them. Have you noticed two of our service stations in town, the new one at Hall's Corner at the end of Washington St., most attractively planted to soften the impact of commercialism, and no doubt to lure many customers, too; the other in Snug Harbor, bright with red roses now, a festival of lavender lilacs a month ago? By contrast, who would want to patronize an oil-polluted junk yard with no trees, rickety buildings and peeling paint, even if a descendant of John Alden himself owned it?

Look around at Hall's Corner. The garish old signs are coming down. New, attractive ones go up. Near the shopping center, old houses are rebuilt into a charming store and an artist's gallery. At Snug Harbor, if you can find space to park, you can enjoy a series of boutiques and alluring shops in carefully redecorated buildings. And perhaps best of all, our new firehouse on Tremont St. shows well-kept lawns, pleasantly spaced trees, and right now prize-winning yellow and red roses. All thanks to a Chief who cares for his town beyond the call of duty.

You can call all this civic pride, good business, ecological horse sense, self-defense, or whatever; but the point is, our town appreciates the need to keep up, even to move ahead. When a group of boys like the Scouts of Explorer Post 82 will take the initiative to set up a recycling unit for cans, paper, and eventually glass, they are working not only for our town, but providing an inspiration for many another community. We have something in civic accomplishment going here; so "wash and squash" your cans, tie your papers in bundles, and bring them to the receiving center (that old yellow bus) at the dump. The boys will see to the rest, and when you find the coming generation taking charge for the public good, work with them.

Some things seem not so good. A couple of years ago the Town voted to have the tide gates at the Mill Pond at the upper end of Washington St. put back in order that the ancient pond could again be used to hold back the Bluefish River and mirror the stately houses along its shores. With the water in, this becomes a spot that Duxbury can be proud of and any visitor will long remember. But some few prejudiced people do not see the pond as an asset, and apparently they have more influence than the voters of the Town, for the gates remain open with the mudflats exposed most of the time.

In like fashion, last year's Town Meeting passed a "Sense of the Meeting" resolution that the carnival called Duxbury Days, since it had become largely a commercial promotion and no longer a patriotic celebration, should have the necessary police protection paid for by the commercial interests involved, and not by the Town. Apparently, that has not been done. It would be a shame to abandon celebration of Independence Day with all that the day connotes in Duxbury; but it would be no shame at all to strip it of vulgarity and return it to its true meaning.

Ever since 1636 the town has been working to improve itself, growing slowly most of the time, adding improvements to meet the growth. Now, in a period of almost violent expansion compared with the early days, we fight to maintain the distinctive character of our Town in a rushing world which threatens to overwhelm us. We have all kinds of organizations to help accomplish the task, the Conservation Committee and the Friends of Conservation, the Planning Board and the long range committees associated with it, the Garden Clubs, the P.T.A., the Scouts, the Rural & Historical Society, and many more. Yes, there are concerned people in Duxbury today, just as there were three and a half centuries ago, and they will probably leave their children an inheritance of pride in our town.